



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

April 1, 2005

News Release

ICE DEPORTS CONVICTED FELON AND MEXICAN FUGITIVE *Criminal alien was turned over to Mexican authorities to face fraud charges*

HOUSTON – A convicted aggravated felon, sex offender, and fugitive from Mexican authorities was deported today to Mexico by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers.

Rafael Moyeda Morales, 40, a Mexican citizen, was convicted and sentenced for smuggling 35 pounds of marijuana in Brownsville, Texas, in February 2002. He served a two-year sentence at the Texas Department of Corrections (TDC).

After serving his criminal sentence, ICE officers took Morales into custody Feb. 16 as part of his deportation processing. During this process, ICE learned that Morales was also wanted by the Attorney General's office in Mexico on fraud charges for possessing counterfeit Mexican currency.

"This guy is no saint. He had a long criminal history on drug smuggling charges, sexual assault, DWI's and now Mexican authorities want him on fraud charges," said Charles Arendale, ICE Houston field office director for Detention and Removal Operations. "We will continue to strengthen our relationship with the Mexican authorities and not allow criminals to hide in our communities."

Morales first entered the United States in July 1981 as a legal permanent resident. He was convicted for sexual assaulting a 13-year-old girl and was sentenced to seven years probation. Morales violated the terms of his probation and began serving a five-year prison sentence at TDC in 1984.

Morales was placed into removal proceedings in 1989. However, an immigration judge granted him relief which allowed him to stay in the United States with his family.

Today, based on the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1996, aggravated felons and sex offenders are deportable aliens from the United States.

Since he arrived in the United States, Morales had been arrested several times for: possessing marijuana, sexual assault and multiple DWIs.

Earlier today, ICE officers turned Morales over to the Mexican authorities near Laredo, Texas.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.